

Ike Regime Has Trouble Devising Program to Aid Low-Income Farm Families

By OVID A. MARTIN
Associated Press Farm Reporter
WASHINGTON (AP) — The Eisenhower administration has run into difficulty in drafting a program to help the nation's low income farm families. Such a program was promised by the President in his State of the Union Message in Congress in January.

"Greater attention," the chief executive said, "must be directed to the needs of low income farm families. Twenty-eight per cent of the farm operator families have net cash incomes of less than \$1,000 a year."

Eisenhower said he would later submit recommendations designed to "assure the steady alleviation of their most pressing concerns."

The administration submitted this problem to its 18-member National Agricultural Advisory Commission last year. The commission is made up of farm leaders and educators. With the aid of Agriculture Department experts in the field, a report on the problem was prepared.

Revisions Sought
Several weeks ago a tentative draft was sent back to its authors for revisions.

This action led to speculation in farm circles that the administration was experiencing difficulty in deciding on a course of action. There is a wide difference of viewpoint as to just how far the government should go to help distressed families remain on the land.

Some in agriculture contend that there are too many farmers. They cite agriculture's problem of surplus production. They would not use the power of the government to prevent small, inefficient opera-

tors from being squeezed out of farming through the bankruptcy route.

On the other hand, there are others who would use the full power of the government to help all farm families who desire to stay on the land, obtain sufficient land, machinery and livestock to provide an efficient farm that would earn a desirable level of income.

Easy Loans
Such help would include easy government loans and special technical guidance by experts, paid by the government.

Then there are viewpoints in between these two extremes.

Administration officials were reluctant to discuss the presidential promise of a program, except to say that it probably would be some time yet before recommendations were made. The administration program could well become an issue in next year's presidential campaign.

A program to help the low income farmers would not start from scratch. Through the Farmers' Home Administration, the government is making farm purchase and operational loans to farmers

who are unable to get credit elsewhere. It also offers technical guidance through local agents.

Except for those who would have the government keep its hands off, the present program is generally regarded as inadequate. The administration must feel so, or else it would not have promised more.

Perhaps most critical of the present program is the National Farmers Union, a general farm organization which claims to have a membership heavily weighted by low income farmers.

Claims Made
In fact, the Farmers Union claims that the Eisenhower administration has little interest in the small farmer.

It has written Secretary of Agriculture Benson that "The whole current drift of the farm policies of the executive branch of the federal government is in the direction of an increased percentage of tenancy, concentration of farm land ownership, continued poverty for the already unfortunate and imposed poverty for those in the middle brackets who up to now have been able to earn relatively adequate incomes from their farms."

The Farmers Union contends that low income farmers suffer most from such GOP farm policies as lower price supports, restrictions on production, curbing of federal crop insurance, and reductions in loan and administrative funds for the Farmers' Home Administration.

Aim at Efficiency
The farm organization claims the administration seeks to force inefficient farmers out of agriculture. It takes little stock in the argument that there are too many farmers or that there are excessive surpluses of farm products.

It argues that the nation's growing population will need the productive capacity of the small farmers before many years.

Administration leaders lean more in the direction of the view that migration from the farms — which has been going on since early days of the century — should not be discouraged. Rather, some of its spokesmen say, the government should make that migration as favorable as possible.

Better Training
This could be done, they say, by providing much better vocation-

al training for rural youth in both farm and non-farm skills and by helping to provide opportunities off farms for rural youths.

Emphasizing this off-farm approach, Secretary Benson told the National Catholic Rural Welfare Life Conference last fall that jobs outside agriculture need not necessarily take farm boys and girls out of rural living.

"There are opportunities in such lines as operating grain elevators, selling and servicing farm equipment, operating cotton gins and the like," he said.

Some administration leaders feel that much of the problem of low income in agriculture is contributed by part-time farmers. They argue that such farmers should be encouraged to find full-time employment off farms.

Another segment contributing to the problem are full-time farmers on inadequate farming units. Some contend that such persons should be encouraged to move from the farm and their land gradually retired from farming.

Officials generally agree that there are some low income producers who could be made into

efficient, higher income level farmers if they had more land or more machinery, equipment and effective individual guidance.

Oppose 'Forcing'
Some congressional leaders join the Farmers Union in opposing any action that would tend to "force" anyone from leaving farming. They would extend liberal governmental aid to encourage the part-time farmer to stay on the land if he so desired.

In this connection Sen. Sparkman (D-Ala) and Rep. Patman (D-Tex) have introduced bills in Congress that would direct various agencies of the government to help improve the income of low income rural people.

The government would be directed by these bills to provide low interest, long term government loans to part-time and full-time farmers in amounts sufficient to establish them on a higher standard of living.

The measures also would direct government-operated employment offices to help farmers obtain off-farm jobs and the Department of Health, Education and Welfare to provide a program of adult vocation-

training "both in farm and home management and in such other farm and non-farm activities" as may be needed to help low income families increase their incomes.

Many Obstacles
Administration officials say there are many obstacles to proposals to aid low income farmers. One is what they call a deep-seated belief in "agricultural fundamentalism," which holds that farm life is the good life, and looks askance at industrialization in any form.

Officials say this view overlooks the fact that overcrowding of people on the land may lead to rural slums which are just as vicious as city slums, though less noticeable because they are off the beaten path.

In addition, commercial farmers are not overly enthusiastic about the added production which would flow from improving the technology of inefficient farms. On the other hand, organized industrial labor does not welcome an influx of workers from low-income farms.

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Albany Meet To Air O & C Legislation

Possible effects of proposed new right-of-way regulations for logging roads on Oregon and California lands in western Oregon will be aired at a meeting in Albany, Tuesday, March 15.

The meeting, which will begin at 8 p. m. at the American Legion Club, 116 West 1st Ave., is sponsored by groups representing independent loggers and lumbermen, farmers, organized labor and business men.

Analysis of proposed new regulations by attorneys of interested organizations indicates that if approved the regulations would give private land owners intermingled with O and C lands virtual monopoly of public timber through control of access roads, according to Ray C. Swanson, president of the Western Forest Industries Association.

Approval, if granted, would be given by Secretary of Interior Douglas McKay.

Swanson said that under present regulations the number of sales at which competitive bids were received has risen from only 16 per cent in 1949, the year before the regulations were issued, to 64 per cent last year.

During the same period, he said, the sum received by the 18 counties sharing in receipts from timber sales on O and C lands has more than tripled.

"If competition for public timber is restricted," Swanson continued, "many mills without large private timber holdings will find it difficult, if not impossible, to continue operating."

The March 15 meeting was called to review and compare basic principles of existing right-of-way regulations with the new proposals made by the Bureau of Land Management.

Organizations participating in sponsorship of the meeting are the Oregon Farmers Union, International Woodworkers of America, Northwest Council Lumber and Sawmill Workers Union, Western Forest Industries Association and the Independence Chamber of Commerce.

East Oregon Cattle Tested

A recent survey in which 2,063 cattle in Eastern Oregon were tested shows 56 per cent have anaplasmosis, Dr. K. J. Peterson, State Veterinarian for the State Agricultural Department, Division of Animal Industry, reported Saturday.

Tests were conducted at the Beltsville, Md. laboratory.

Oregon was selected for this test because anaplasmosis has been present for more than 20 years. The Oregon area was the first place in the United States where the new test was put to extensive use.

Dr. Patterson said this disease is peculiar in that it is transmitted from one cow to another, usually by the bite of an insect. It also may be transmitted mechanically by man if proper caution and sterilization is not maintained during any surgical procedure.

Jail Altered to Fit Food Trays

BLOOMINGTON, Ill. (AP)—The County Jail got a new shipment of food trays made by inmates of the state penitentiary at Joliet. That was good.

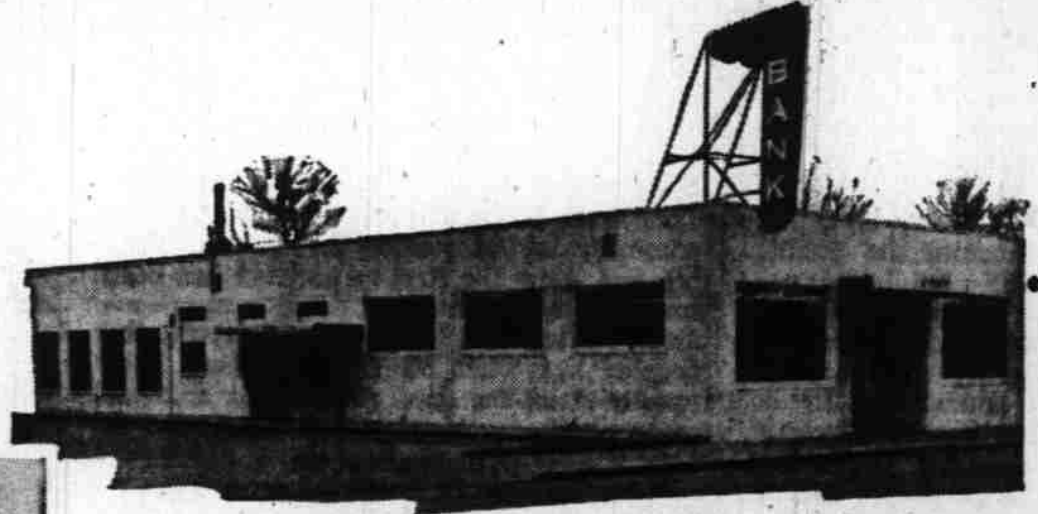
But the trays for feeding prisoners were too big for special openings shaped for passing them through barred jail doors. That was bad.

Workmen took torch and enlarged the openings by a half inch. That was good.

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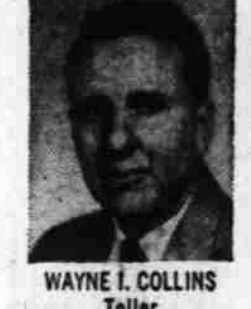
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The Willamette Valley Bank, with its friendly staff and two modern banking offices, has joined the United States National Bank of Portland, effective Monday, March 14. Their two convenient locations will remain unchanged...with the same helpful staff and complete banking facilities to serve Salem. The main office of the Willamette Valley Bank at 1990 Fairgrounds Road will now be known as the North Salem Branch, United States National Bank. The University Branch at 1310 State Street will continue under that name. Now, with four convenient banking offices in Salem and 60 state-wide locations, we are more than ever ready to serve you wherever and whatever your personal and business banking needs may be.



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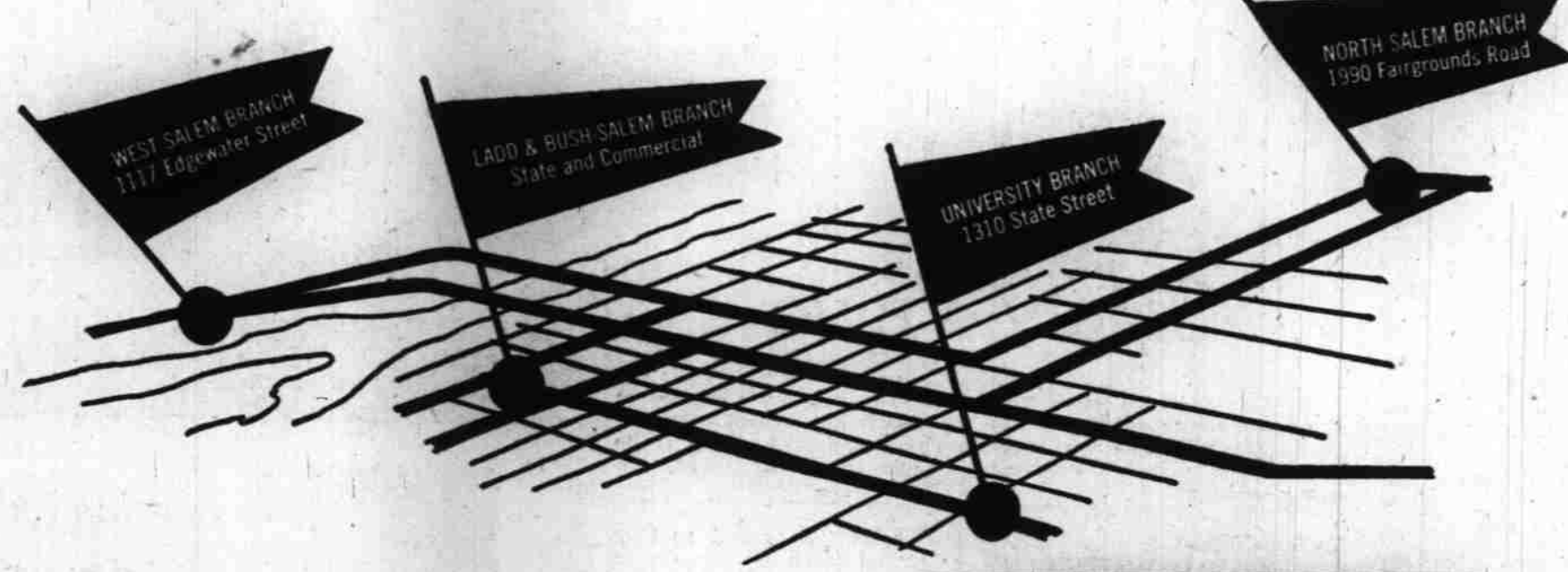
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